



2006 Census: Census Facts

- The following are factual information about the Census:
- The Census of Population and Housing aims to accurately measure the number of people in Australia on Census Night, their key characteristics, and the dwellings in which they live.
- The only exception to the Census count is foreign diplomats and their families. Even if you are just visiting Australia you are counted. This is regardless of how long you have been in the country or how long you plan to stay. Australian residents out of the country on Census Night are not included.
- The Census will be conducted on August 8, 2006. Forms will be delivered to about 10 million households across the country.
- The Census is conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Prior to 1975 the ABS was known as the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. This is the fifteenth Census conducted by the bureau since 1911.
- Originally it was planned to hold a Census every 10 years, but depression and war put things out of alignment. From 1961 Censuses were held once every five years. The previous Census was in 2001.
- There are 61 questions on the Census Household Form.
- There are 55 questions on the Census Personal Form.
- The total weight of the paper used in the Census Guides alone is about 500 tonnes, or the total weight of over 300 family sedans. If the papers of all the Guides were laid end to end, the paper would stretch around the entire Australian coastline.
- The printing of the Census forms is an even bigger job. There will be nearly 13 million Census forms printed. Their total weight is 950 tonnes. The forms are printed on high grade paper specially designed to allow scanning by the Data Processing Centre in Melbourne.
- These are the two main components of the 1,800 tonnes of printed material that will be used on this year's Census.

- The Census tells us how many we are and gives us an insight into who we are by providing certain key characteristics of everyone in Australia on Census Night.
- Census information is used for a range of planning purposes by all levels of government, private institutions and the community. It is used to determine such things as where schools and hospitals will be built.
- The number of seats each state and territory has in the House of Representatives is also based on Census figures, as are federal funding arrangements to the states and territories.
- Four new topics will be included in the 2006 Census: whether a person needs assistance in core activities; the type of Internet connection households have; whether voluntary or unpaid work or caring is carried out, and the number of children ever born to females aged over 15 years.
- Census forms will be delivered in the days prior to 8 August 2006, from 28 July to 7 August. Each household is asked to fill in the details specified on their Census form - usually one person completes the form on behalf of the others living in the household.
- Most Census forms will be collected by early September, but Census processing will begin on 28 August. Generally, Collectors will work between 8.30am and 8pm.
- People have the option of filling in the Census via the Internet. This option is called the eCensus.
- Each household will be given a household form, a guide which helps you fill out the Census and a sealed eCensus envelope. If you choose the eCensus option you will need to enter the household number which is on the main form and the PIN which is inside the envelope.
- As with the 2001 Census, people will be given an option to have the information on their Census forms preserved for 99 years in the National Archives of Australia. After 99 years the information will be released for research purposes. Researchers such as genealogists and social historians are very much in favour of this option. For individuals, it is a way of being included in the historical research of the future.
- Census information will not be retained in this way if the person filling in the form indicates in the appropriate place that they do not want it to happen. These Census forms will be destroyed at the end of processing.

- The Data Processing Centre will employ over 800 people to process the data from the Census forms.
- It will take about 12 months from the start of processing in late August until the first Census data is released.
- Once processed the Census forms will be destroyed.
- No individual will be able to be identified from the final Census data.
- The information of those who have chosen to have their Census information preserved for 99 years will be stored on microfilm by the National Archives of Australia. But the forms themselves will also be destroyed.

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